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THE ACT AGAINST Conventicles EXECUTED:

WITH A

VINDICATION

OF THE

Bedford-ſhire JUSTICES Proceedings,

From the Aſperſions of a

False, Impertinent, and Libellous

PAMPHLET,

Entituled,

A true and impartial *NARRATIVE* of ſome Illegal and Arbitrary *Proceedings* by certain *Juſtices of the Peace*, and others, againſt ſeveral Innocent and Peaceable Non-conformiſts, in and near the Town of *Bedford*, upon pretence of putting in Execution the late ACT againſt Conventicles.

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The ACT againſt CONVENTICLES EXECUTED:

With

A *VINDICATION* of the *Bedfordſhire* Justices Proceedings, from the Aſperſions of a falſe, impertinent, and libellous Pamphlet, *&c.*

AFter I *was informed, That the Juſtices (generally) did account it too great a leſſening both of themſelves and their Actions (which they will juſtifie to the World) to take any notice of ſo wretched a Scrowl, void both of ſenſe and integrity; upon examining the Paper, I did believe it very unfit, that ſuch a bundle of ſcandalous Falſhoods, ſhould*

have free acceſs to all ſorts of Readers without any contradiction: Which is all the account why I took upon me the trouble to give it an Anſwer. And yet, notwithſtanding this condiſcention, I have ſo good an opinion of my ſelf, as to think that this ſordid Scribler can no ways deſerve to be acquainted with my name, and therefore I ſhall chuſe (by concealing that) to pelt him in the dark, according to his own Law at Arms.

But, before I make the firſt Onſlaught upon the Ribaldry of this Paper, I muſt prevail ſomething upon the patience of the Reader, by engaging to be as brief as it is poſſible upon ſuch a ſubject: Very well knowing, That both the Names and Actions of all ſuch latent Traducers, are then only placed in their proper Sphere, when they are rank'd in a Gaolers Calendar before the Aſſizes. And this in the firſt place will be evident enough, upon an impartial Examination of the Title Page of this Libel.

Where you ſhall find, the due Execution of an Act of Parliament, *ſtyled* Illegal and Arbitrary Proceedings, *by the ſame Antiphraſis (which in our Idiom is courſely tranſlated a plain*

Lye)

Eye) as disobedient and turbulent Offenders, are called innocent and peaceable Non-conformists. Therefore whoever will become a competent Interpreter of this new Text, must Janus-like have two fronts; one with Eyes forward to read Pretences, but those of his understanding must be placed behind; to inable him to discover the Antartick Truth. And the same Rules also, notwithstanding their pretences to sincerity and innocence, are applicable both to their Actions and Dealings as well as their Writings: To say nothing of their false Weights and Measures, for which they have been often convicted; of the Arraignment of several of them at the Bar, for wickedly seducing a Servant to steal his Masters Goods; their clandestine Traffick and Compacts for the same Commodities; of the impudence of a Teacher, who undertook to Dispence his Gifts to the People in a stolen Cloak; their Complaints of one another in the Commissaries Court for brutish Incontinence: And to complete their Morals amongst us, they justifie their Alliegeance by Acts of Rebellion, and pay Reverence to Magistrates, by traducing Superiours,

and

and make Narratives of the Truth, *by forging* Falſhoods; *as if they had been taught in* Scoggens *School to untile Houſes, to find Hares, or more properly, in their own phraſe, to ride to* Jeruſalem *with their faces mounted to the Beaſts poſteriors.*

All which will be apparent enough, by unripping the Letter, *the Vizard-Mask to the* Narrative; *in which ſince he hath made bold to put the Juſtices Names to the Character of the* Non-conformiſts, *the beſt way of anſwering, will be by changing its part, and ſtating it a Proſelyte, and then republiſh it to the World, converted to the Truth after this manner.*

Some proceedings at Bedford, *purſuant of the late Act of Parliament* (a true Narrative *whereof is herewith publiſhed*) afford wonder and diſlike *only to thoſe whoſe Crimes have deſerved them; when you have peruſed this Paper, you will conclude with me and others, that this* Text needs no Comment; *it is plain, that in deſpight of* Magna Charta, *and in defiance to all* Laws and Rules of Righteouſneſs, Neighbourhood and Humanity, *the* Non-conformiſts *reſolve once more,* to ruin the Nation,

although

although the Inſtruments *(now as well as heretofore) are no ways able* to recompence the King and Kingdomes dammage *thereby*, the ſcandalized *in the Libel are* unconcerned and peaceable; *their immediate* Revilers *are the* ſcum of the People; *and ought chiefly to be the* appendants *(as in the former ſenſe of this Anſwer)* of the Commiſſaries Court: *The moſt forward* Inſtrument *of that ſort, is one that openly avowed and declared his eſteem for* Atheiſm *above any Religion. If ſome* Check *be not given to theſe* extravagancies, *many* Families *will be ſuddenly* ruined, *the* publick Trade *and* Welfare endangered, *which the* Intereſt *of ſome, the* Rage, Revenge *and* Enmity *of* others *will not admit regard to. Pardon this trouble, when I have told you the particulars of this Anſwer are all true, and will be proved in every part. Thus Excrements become Sanatives, upon ſome accounts.*

Indeed he is very correſpondent to himſelf, for this Letter is of the ſame Tenour with the Libel, and both like the Oracles of his grand Patron the Devil, then trueſt when they are conſtrued backwards.

This

This is the measure also by which he and his Party, state the Actions of Magistrates; according to the composition of some sort of Pictures, on which if you take a direct and right view, they present the pourtraiture of a beautiful Person, but if side ways with them, their squinting Opticks will shew you a Serpent: The Demonstration is before you: Now we come to consider the old Trade newly vampt, which he calls a Narrative, *the first Prologue to above Twenty years Tragedy.*

ON *Lords day, May the fifteenth, &c.*] *In Nomine Domini* this Wretch begins to insinuate, that an impudent and ignorant Cobler, whom he calls Preacher, might be occasioned from the discourse of a Magistrate, to call the Church of *England Antichristian, &c.* although he afterwards insolently repeated the same words at a publick *Session*, for which he is bound over, at which time all sensible persons (without a *Comment*) will judge that he would have set a stricter watch upon his tongue, had not his overboiling ignorance and malice, and the hopes both of Maintenance, and prevalency from the numbers of his Party, infatuated this *thin-soul'd Wight* at once to discover the common Vogue of them all.

Page 4. The only truth in this page is, that *Battison* hath manifested himself, in the Execution of this Act, to be as honest and dutiful a Subject to the King, in his degree, as any in the Nation; and if when he hired a Chamber to lay up Grain, the Libeller will not allow the *Saints Mault* to be included under that title; it must be by some *quirk of the Spirit*; for he will find no distinction, either in the *Logick* or *Philosophy* of ordinary Taunters. By such another Sophism in the Law, he averrs a fair sale and delivery of the Mault and the Mault-house, although the first Owner at this day continues the possession of both. But one thing more in this case is apparent enough (without Annotations) that notwithstanding the *illegal* and *barbarous* behaviour of the vulgar people (as it is stated by the *Scribler* himself) yet we hear of no *arbitrary* Outrages committed, beyond the bounds of the Act, by the *inhumane* Justices.

The next complaint is, that (at a dead lift) the Officers did charge some *Gentlemen* of the Town to aid and assist them: But setting aside the *Scribes* beloved *Antiphrasis*, they were both ordinary, and factious Tradesmen: And thus they can dub one another *Gentlemen* without Arms, *Saints* without *Righteousness*, *Preachers* without *Orders*, *Lawyers* without *Learning*; for by the magnifying Glass of the *Spirit* they did ever make their Mole-hills Mountains, and their Geese Swans.

The next design this *Pamphleter* hath, is to intimate to the World, how much the sufferings of their *Disciples* are against the grain of the people; as if they

had shut up *Shops* as in a *Post*, and let the *Shire-Town* dwindle to a Countrey-Village: Here something, like truth, hath unawares dropt from his pen, for it falling out upon a *Holy-day*, the *Conforming* Party had shut up their Shops, and those only were opened, whose *factious Owners* are too well known to be the *Plague* both of Church and State.

The most remarkable passages in the sixth page are these, first, his *Pharisaical* dubbing a piriful *Pedler* into a Dealer in Linnen-Drapery, for indeed they should not be called like other Men.

And secondly, The *Libellers* own *monstrous* Conversion into a Distreiner; no other Distress being made in this case, besides what is in the *Libel*; for the Father-in-law of the *Grocer* did immediately lay down his Sons Fine, expressing much indignation against the actions of him, and sorrow for his Daughter.

The last remark in this page, is the *Libellers* genuine imitation of those Artists in Filching; who had rather steal, than have any thing given them, to keep their Fingers in ure; so he, to no other purpose, but to preserve his faculty bright, hath fathered upon Mr. *F.* a Warrant against a Tanner, which was under the Hands and Seals of all the Justices.

Page 7. Now for the great re-incounter of a silly Widow, seduced from her youth until this day (whose Father indeed was a very honest Gentleman, and detested these Juglers;) but she used her natural Parent then, as she hath since served her heavenly; for being ripe for Conjunction, she stole out of his house

house to Marry her self to an ordinary Tradesman; as she now leaves the Church to be espoused to Conventicles; whose Fine was inhanced by her own indiscretion to herd her self amongst a pack of beggarly Canary-birds: She bore their burthen at two Meetings, until her fine amounted to Twenty pounds, for which this spiritual Romancer, by his *Scotch* Accompt, where Thirteen pence half peny is a Mark, hath set down Forty upon Distress; although the Justices have often offered, that either she or her Friends might redeem the Goods at the Fine. But take his own stating, and the Sum of his Evidence will amount to a clear justification of all those who acted in this matter; for the good Woman being first seduced by the Brotherhood to disobey the Kings Laws, and then to cheat him of his Penalty (which they call passive obedience) by a prudential securing the best of her Goods; the Officers were reduced to take what she her self thought was not worth removing.

And now we come to another desolation, where the Libeller again cannot see Wood for Trees, nor Men for People; and all in the behalf of two beggarly Teachers (to say no worse) both which had not substance enough to pay one Fine (as the Widow can witness) and by his own calculation also of the number of Hats; which doth not amount to so many as a travelling Furbusher carrieth at his back.

The next remove is to his Cheats in Parchment, and indeed these deserve to be ingrossed; for here is a Deed maintained to be void of Fraudulency, which was really made and dated three days after the Con-

viction of the Seller, and the Buyer was frankly told by all the Justices present, as well as Sir *G. B.* that his undertaking for other Mens Debts, over and above his own satisfaction, did plainly evidence a design to defraud the King of his Right. But the concerns of the Saints do so much transcend those of ordinary Subjects (they being the first born of the people in all sorts of Cheats) that their Soveraign Interest (although elder than theirs) must not stand in their way. Witness these new, and their old Transactions, and that by an inversion of sense they make good the Maxim, *Nullum tempus occurret Regi:* And however this Shark resolves still to play out his hand with false Dice, yet there was not any one person who was pretended to be concerned in the rest of the Debts, did ever offer to the Justices to aver his Interest. But some time afterwards the most considerable amongst them, did upon an accidental discourse to one of the Justices acknowledge, that although there might be some such engagement, yet the Deed was principally framed to secure the Owner: Neither did Sir *G. B.* bind over *Leyfield*, any other ways than by being present whilst another took his Bond, as the other Justices were, who all owned the Act. For the rest of this Paragraph, it consists of speeches raised by the *Libeller*, and falsely imputed to Sir *G. B.* but are a most true remonstrance, both of the merits, and designs, of all the *Party*.

But to set him right a little, this I have heard Sir *G. B.* will own, that when a *Secluded Alderman* of the most considerable Fortune in *Bedford* did tell him

him before another Person, that he heard that the *Phanaticks* had said, *They did expect another Day for it*, He replied, *The sooner the better*, if *it must be so*: And considering how nearly related the person that spake it is to the *Basest Transactor* in the Late Rebellion, that ever served any Party; it seems most fit, that the Governors of the Kingdom should determine this Controversie.

The next Paragraph you will find fill'd with the old *Leaven* and stench of impudent Forgery; for here was no Distress taken when the *Libel* was composed, besides what he himself hath made, upon the Truth and Reputation of some persons, who are of too much Worth and Integrity to have their Actions mentioned by so Ignominious a Scribler; forthe King's *Officers* (more out of the Principles of Kindness, than Discretion) did take the words of the Offenders mentioned, to render their goods when the Justices should demand them; but *Ruffhead*, one chiefly quoted in this part of the *Libel*, did, after a months Indulgence from the *Officer*, refuse to deliver up his goods according to his engagement: this is the *Disciple* of St *Crispin*, who came of himself, and was not brought as in the *Libel* to the *Justice*, and told him, he had refused to let *Feckman* come upon his ground, because not named in the warrant; who candidly let him know (to prevent danger) he could not deny him to enter as an *assistant* to the *Constable*.

Whilst we have thus ransackt the *Libellers Cittadel*, he hath gained an opportunity to make his escape out at a *Postern*; the old trick of such *Combatants*, who ac-

according to the *Scotch Phraſe* are baſhful before an Enemy: Therefore we muſt hunt the Purlews to renew the reencounter; and the firſt intelligence we can get of him, is from a Country Village not far from *Bedford*; where (*guided by his Spirit*) he hath found out another *Canton* of the ſame *Tribe*. Here he rallies with very much noiſe, advancing more Colours, Drums and Trumpets, than the remnant of his *Raſcaly* than pretend to manage, the Pedant Stratagem to amuſe an enemy, whilſt he makes his retreat; the firſt flaunting pelt the Runnagate makes, is againſt the ſufficiencie of the relation of a little Child, as he is pleaſed to call her; indeed I do not know by what account he meaſures the growth of his *Babes of Grace*; but, by the report of the Neighbourhood, ſhe is fourteen or fifteen years old; and it ſeems capable enough of *falſe Doctrine*; for ſhe was an Auditor, but not of the Truth; eſpecially in ſo difficult a paſſe to try her underſtanding, as at the next houſe amongſt her neighbours, to know where ſhe was, and whom ſhe ſaw, which was all the uſe was made of her: But he makes bold to clip the *Kings evidence*, as well as His *Patrimony* for a wife of one of the *Gang* confeſſed to two others, that ſhe was at the Meeting, and the ſame day the Conſtable ſaw amongſt the *Brotherhood* an *Itinerant Bawler*, who was Speaker at that Meeting; this and more was informed before any Warrant was iſſued, which I ſuppoſe in the judgment of ſober perſons will be allowed, is ground enough for a Summons; the Examination and Oath were both taken by ſeveral Juſtices as well as Sir *G. B.*

as

as the Warrant under all their Hands and Seals makes appear; but *cui bono* if a ſingle Juſtice had taken it, as the *Libeller* falſely affirms, the Action was warrantable; ſo that all I know can be ſaid to it is, that he gives you this great Lye *gratis*, out of the abundance of his ſtore, but he tells you *that none of them would confeſs either the Meeting or the Preacher, although they were preſſed by the Juſtices with an engagement to acquit them in caſe they would do ſo.*

Here you have him tottering upon his two rotten ſupporters, *nonſenſe* and *falſhood*, for firſt, how can a confeſſion procure a diſcharge, and then the Juſtices acted more ingeniouſly a contrary way, for they offered, notwithſtanding the accuſation, if any could make it appear, or *bona fide* affirm, they were not at the Meeting, they ſhould be acquitted; but the guilt of their Conſciences (which never reſtrained them before) diſmabling them to do either, beſides the confeſſion of the firſt, it was collected from ſome others, that they had been there, and ſo were convicted by the notoriety both of the circumſtance and evidence of the Fact, as it now ſtands recorded; and to convince the Reader there was no miſtake in the Juſtices, after the parties found there was no relief in colluſions, the Meeting and the Teacher were openly confeſſed.

The next *Saint* to be vindicated is as great a *Villain* (with Reverence be it ſpoken) both for baſe language and actions, as the *Libeller* himſelf, as he was made to underſtand when he aſſaulted Sir *G. B.* with provoking and ſcurrilous ſpeeches, which according

to

to the manners and ſtile of the *Saints* is ſuing for favour, and had both *falſely* and *ſaucily* traduced him to his fellow Juſtice, and his fellow Juſtice to him: But it is a ſhame to publiſh more of his Character in print, than what hath dropt from the *Libellers* own Pen, even in defence of the *Saint*; for you ſee he hath like a faithleſs wretch *broke open the lock* of another perſon, who was engaged for his Rent, and *Cancelled a Deed*, which he had paſſed under his own Hand and Seal, for his Counter ſecurity, without either the knowledge or conſent of the party; neither did he mention this Cancelling, until his Son was Convicted, who did after that alſo acknowledge to the Conſtable, that he was Owner of the Goods; which appears plain enough by his Agents taking the profit of the Cattle, after his Father-in-laws pretended Sale.

The remainder of this Paragraph, is a Declaration in baſe Language, that amongſt this beggarly Rabble the King muſt loſe his Right; which in truth is his Lot from all the *Conventicles* hitherto Convicted; therefore to acquit the Informers, we may upon all accounts whatſoever juſtly ſtile the *Libeller, and his crew, the ſcum of the People.*

Thus againſt my inclinations, I have been forced to publiſh the moſt *illegal, inhumane* and *ungoaly behaviour of the Libeller and his leaven*, that I might ſtrip Falſhood out of the Covering of Truth, and juſtifie to the World the Magiſtrates Tranſactions, which they are willing to ſubmit to the Cenſure of the Laws, and of all ſober People. Neither had this

this *Scribler* the leaſt ground to impute any peculiar or ſingle action to Sir *G. B.* for it appears all along that he hath acted jointly with his Fellow Juſtices, who (in relation to the Countreys happineſs) I declare are ſo well knowing, unanimous, and active in all parts of their Duty, that they need no Leader; therefore this is eaſily diſcovered to be but a ſtale ſtratagem of their old *Mareſchal de Camp*, or if you had rather of their *grand Muſter-Maſter Satan*; *Divide & impera*: Take off the old Cavaliers firſt (who can give warning of their Wiles) and then the young ones will become a luſcious prey. But to prevent this, it is not to be queſtioned, but that our Governours will manifeſt a moſt ſignal kindneſs and protection to the former, which is the true means to confirm and give encouragement to the latter.

And now when I hop'd that my task was over, up ſtarts a long-ear'd *Foal* of the *braying Dam*, or rather a Calf ſlinkt by the laſt *Mate* to the *Geneva Bull*, which ſome few years ſince Mooted Wonders from ſeveral parts of this Nation, but however it was dropt into the World, I can aſſure you it ſtinks like a *Sooterken* after a *Dutch Frows* Delivery, and therefore preſently muſt be deſtroyed to preſerve the Neighbourhood. Its ill-look'd front bears a ſcandalous compariſon, between one *Prior*, and *Feckman*; but as to the former he had never any application to the Juſtices; except (heretofore) to reclaim his diſorders, neither are any Diſtreſſes placed at his houſe, notwithſtanding the Libellers impudent forgery: And as for the Death of the latter, his Wife is depo-

 ſed

ſed that he was ſeized about eight years ſince with the like ſudden Diſtemper, to the great hazzard of his life; neither could it be expected that by the ſtrength of Nature, ſo great a violence ſhould be twice withſtood by any conſtitution. And for his behaviour in the time of his Viſitation, to his Wifes, you may have the Oath of Mr. *Bradſhaw*, a very Reverend and Learned Divine, whoſe practice ſuits (as much as humanity permits) to his Orthodox Doctrine; that during the time of his weakneſs, his behaviour was ſedate, and correſpondent to the condition of a dying perſon, and as for the employment he had taken from the Juſtices, he ſtedfaſtly declared, that he was ſatisfied in Conſcience that he had done the Church and State good ſervice, as having been inſtrumental in Executing the Act. And that if he was to begin again he would willingly take upon him the ſame engagement. Thus this *Libellers* Wonders, as well as his other Relations, are but the fruits of *Sodom*; unexamined, and at a diſtance, they bear a deluding out-ſide, but at the approaches of truth, they prove but duſt and aſhes.

And here again I would gladly have been acquitted of the *Libeller* and his Crew, having driven them now into their *proper Herd*; amongſt *Satan and Witches*; for they alſo were ſtiled from the beginning of Times (as old Languages tell us) *Forgers of Miracles*; but this *long-winded Bawler*, hath learn'd of his Tutor *Hugh Peters* to turn the other *glaſs*, for behold a Poſtſcript behind, their Kirk in a Cloak-bag, or rather a great *tayl* fixt by the *Libeller* himſelf to the

back

back of his *Pamphlet*, that it may out-mode *Battiſon*; it hath a præter-natural diſcent, from a *Calf* and a *Fox*; for they ever delighted in monſtrous productions, witneſs the Coitions of the *Elders Maid*, and the *Quaker*, with their *four-footed Loves*.

But he uſes this *Train* as a *Squirrel* doth hers, to palliate and cover all the Cheats and Abuſes contained in his *Libel*, which, notwithſtanding the ſmall part of the Fox, are eaſily diſcerned.

The firſt Attempt he makes in this *Poſteript* is, with moſt opprobrious and injurious terms, to ſtate a parallel betwixt the proceedings of *Bedfordſhire* and thoſe of other Countreys; in which he publiſhes to the World, that all that have to deal with them muſt expect dung in the Ballance.

In the next place, by their old Trayterous Sophiſm in a new Dreſs, he maintains, that reviling the *Kings Magiſtrates*, and reproaching his *Agents*, is no Diſobedience to their *Soveraign*, nor Reflection upon the *Government*.

And again, I am aſtoniſh'd to ſee with what a profligated Impudence he averres themſelves peaceable, and their Actions harmleſs, when the Prince is hardly warm in his Throne, nor his party in the Remnants of their ſhattered Eſtates, ſince by the very ſame *Methods* and *Principles* this ſort of people did reduce three Nations into one *Aceldama*, and then alſo, as now, (at the beginning) the people heard the voice of *Jacob*, and afterwards felt, both upon thei Lives and Fortunes, the rough hands of *Eſau*.

In the laſt place he gives notice of three *plain Ends*,

as he calls them, of publiſhing this Libel; and in this he ſaith well; for the firſt is to prepare the whole party of *Non-conformiſts* to be as refractory in their Diſobedience to the Kings Laws as the *Sectaries* of *Bedford*; which he, in this place, by his *Old Figure*, calls a *patient, quiet and peaceable bearing their provocations and trials*; forgetting, *good man*, that in the beginning of his *Libel*, he hath boaſted of their unmalleableneſs to any Conformity with the preſcriptions of this Act, and of the moſt barbarous uſage of the Kings Agents by them and their Accomplices.

But now for the *Second End*; and the *Firſt End* of that is, humbly to ask our Legiſlators a nonſenſical Queſtion, Whether this be the Garment of their Offſpring? O the Myſtical Metaphors of Illumination!

The *Second End* of the *Second* is to return to his Vomit of rayling againſt the Juſtices, when they may ſeek for redreſs from the Laws of the Nation; but he is too much vers'd in his buſineſs to hazard that; for he knows, his Witneſſes, like Terriers, will never claw well but under-ground, being alwayes trained up in private Accuſations.

The *Third End* of the *Second*, is to perſwade our Governours to manifeſt to the people that they have impoſed upon them an *Inconſiderate Act*, by a ſpeedy reviſing it; but in this I ought to refer him to our *Legiſlators* themſelves to try for an Anſwer.

And thus he hath given you *three Ends* in one, to avoid the cenſure of having no End at all: If you pleaſe you may properly call them *a neſt of Boxes*, for

thoſe

thoſe trinkets are very Emblems both of himſelf and his *Libel*, as they are filled with emptineſs. And although ſome Criticks may quarrel this Method, yet I can aſſure them, that this is the old way of branching out Points of Treaſon and Rebellion to their Viperous brood; for their inventions are ever ſwell'd with ſo great a *Plethory*, upon this Subject, that they never fail to produce ſuperfætations, often exceeding the *Lom Countrey* Ladies Conceptions; more *treaſonable Points* than there are days in the year.

And now (if ever he is to be truſted) he is come to his laſt End, which is a tazled Repetition of a moſt *untrue*, *ſcandalous* and *formleſs Babble*. The Subject he hath made ſo bold with, are the Actions of all the *Magiſtrates* and *Officers* in the Nation (as himſelf owns) from the higheſt to thoſe which act in the moſt inferiour degrees; that by traducing them to be void of reaſon, humanity, and righteouſneſs, he might make the ſame reflections upon the *Laws themſelves*. He alſo hath made it apparent enough, that he uſes the expreſſions of Peace but to uſher in War; for his firſt admonitions to, and profeſſions of Patience, Peace, and Quietneſs, are now turned to an Alarm of Suſpitions, Heats, Animoſities, Diſtractions, and Confuſions; (to run over no more of his *Rebellious Roſary*;) which, to uſe his own words, have filled the minds, and do exerciſe the thoughts of all ſorts of Men. And, that he may render a clear teſtimony of this, he tells you of great numbers of perſons who have withdrawn themſelves both from their Habitations and Callings, that they

may

may not contribute any assistance to the Execution of this Act. A symptom of Rebellion (I confess) unheard of before, and higher than any of those which preceded the last unnatural War. For, as to the lower sort of people, what other cause can induce them to leave their Relations and Abodes, than by the instigation of their Leaders to plant themselves conveniently for a *Rendesvouz*. And for those of better quality, I will appeal even to their own Consciences (if there is any thing more than the Name of it left) to give their Prince an accompt, why (upon their own accord) they should lay down that *Commission for the Peace*, which (not long since) they look'd upon as the *most blessed Magna Charta*, to establish them free, both in their Lives and Fortunes, except it be upon the first opportunity to take up another for *War*; and if they shall scape unconcern'd, it cannot but be an example hereafter to all faithless persons, upon the least uncertainty of State, to prepare for a change.

A Wight of this sort was in the Commission for *Bedford*, who employed one that had been a *Rebel in Arms as well as his Worship* (and equally noted with himself for a small parcel of Honesty) *to get the Commission transcribed without his Name in the Catalogue*, and in the Transaction his Agent (well vers'd in small Arts) made use of the inadvertency of the Transcriber, to insert two Gentlemens Names with wrong Titles, to dismable them to Act, but the Sum is mispent, and the Commission corrected, yet however there remains a plain Demonstration, that *the old leaven* will never

never fail to play at any ſort of Game *to abuſe the Government.* Much more might be ſaid to alarm the Magiſtrates, but by this time I ſuppoſe the Reader, as well as my ſelf, is ſick of the *Libeller*; therefore I ſhall conclude with a Requeſt to our Governours, that the Preſſes may be examined to find out the *Author*; that (according to the Rules of Retaliation) he may be *ſtigmatized himſelf for branding Paper.*

FINIS.

A128
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The Poſt-ſcript.

Reader,

THe Libel came late to my hands, otherwiſe this Anſwer had purſued it at the Heels; and if this Lenitive Reply doth not ſtop the Flux of the Scribler, *I will publiſh a more Reſtringent Impreſſion, with all their Names in the Margin. Pardon me, if to diſabuſe the Nation, I have been longer than I intended.*

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